

## CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1           1. (currently amended) A method of making porous near-  
2 net-shape metallic ~~and/or ceramic~~ parts with an open porosity of at  
3 least 10% by volume, the method comprising according to the steps  
4 of:

5           a) forming an injectable mass of a metallic and/or a  
6 ceramic powder of stainless steel, Ti, NiTi, or a titanium alloy,  
7 at least one thermoplastic binder, and at least one place holder;

8           b) injection molding the mass into the shape of the part  
9 to be produced;

10           c) cooling the injection-molded mass and setting it in a  
11 capillary-active material and subjecting it to a first-stage binder  
12 removal to produce an open porosity;

13           d) removing the place holder at least partially from the  
14 part with a fluid;

15           e) subjecting the part to a thermal binder-removing  
16 process;

17           f) subsequently sintering the part.

1           2. (original) The method according to claim 1 wherein  
2 the place holder is NaCl, KCl, K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>, or Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>.

3. (canceled)

1           4. (previously presented) The method according to claim  
2 1 wherein between steps c) and d) there is a thermal binder-  
3 removing step.

1           5. (original) The method according to claim 4 wherein  
2 the thermal binder-removing step is conducted at a temperature up  
3 to 270°C under a protective-gas atmosphere.

1           6. (previously presented) The method according to claim  
2 5 wherein the starting powder has a particle size of less than  
3 20  $\mu$ m.

1           7. (currently amended) The method according to claim  
2 [[6]] 4 wherein the thermal binder-removing step is conducted at a  
3 temperature up to 500°C and under a protective-gas atmosphere.

1           8. (currently amended) The method according to claim 2  
2 wherein [[a]] the fluid heated up to is at about 50°C is used.

1           9. (previously presented) The method according to claim  
2 1 wherein the fluid for removing the place holder is water.

1           10. (original) The method according to claim 1 wherein  
2 a stirred water bath is used in order to remove the place holder.

1           11. (previously presented) The method according to  
2 claim 1 wherein the thermal binder-removing step uses argon as a  
3 protective gas.

1           12. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1  
2 wherein an open porosity in the part is produced of at least 30% by  
3 volume , ~~in particular 50% by volume.~~

1           13. (new) The method according to claim 1 wherein an  
2 open porosity in the part is produced of about 50% by volume.